



## Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Fire Marshal Division

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## **Nevada's Youth Fire Setters Outpace National Average**

*65% of children who set fires in Nevada are in crisis*

Carson City, NV~The Nevada Department of Public Safety's Fire Marshal Division, in partnership with the Fire Prevention Association of Nevada and the Nevada Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators announced a May 9<sup>th</sup> public workshop on Youth Fire Setting. The program will be conducted at the DPS Fire Marshal Division at 107 Jacobsen Way in Carson City.

"Unfortunately, crisis fire setting by children in Nevada is on the increase," said DPS State Fire Marshal Chad Hastings. "This innovative program brings together the top experts on youth fire starting who will share information on why these at risk youth turn to fire starting along with proven intervention techniques to get them back on the right track."

Current statewide statistics compiled by the DPS Fire Marshal Division indicate Nevada has far more "crisis" youth fire setters age 3-13 than the national average. In the US, two-thirds of the children who start fires do so out of curiosity, with one-third of these children exhibiting "crisis" or "complex" fire-starting behaviors with the intent to cause damage or harm. In Nevada, the reverse is true, with 65% of the children using fire as a weapon and who are considered to be in crisis.

"Children who intentionally set fires typically exhibit multiple-risk behaviors and are frequently 'acting out' due to psychological stressors in their lives," Chief Hastings continued. "Many of them are victims of child abuse, sexual assault, neglect and they use fire starting as a plea for help."

The May 9<sup>th</sup> workshop will run from 1:30pm-4:30pm and is open to the public and the media. The following experts will be on hand for one-on-one interviews:

- Michelle Peltier~ DPS-NV State Fire Marshal Division Firesetter Intervention Specialist and Nevada State Risk Watch Champion Management Team Member
- Kathryn Hooper~Youth Fire Setter Program Manager for the Fire Prevention Association of Nevada's youth fire setting program
- Sherri Wilcox~Program Manager for the Fire Prevention Association of Nevada's injury prevention program and Director of the Nevada State Risk Watch Champion Management Team
- Robi Bacon~School Health Education Coordinator, Office of Child Nutrition & School Health, NV Dept. of Education and manager of the Nevada Youth Risk Behavior Survey

For more information on the May 9<sup>th</sup> workshop, contact Michelle Peltier from the DPS Fire Marshal Division at 775-684-7504.

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